

The Last Supper



TEXAS, HOME TO CATTLE RANCHES and more death-row executions than any other state, doesn't allow steak for a final meal. If you order steak in Texas, you get hamburger.

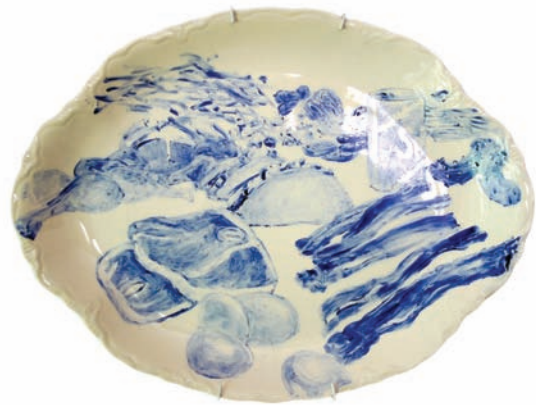
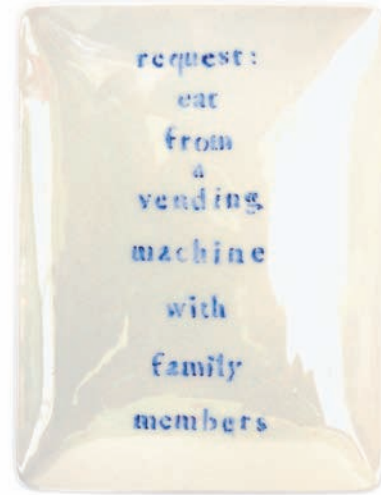
I have always been focused on food. As a kid, I won eating contests; these days I grow organic produce. The years I spent in Oklahoma, which has the highest per capita rate of executions, turned my interest in food toward final meals.

The Last Supper is a series of ceramic plates illustrating final meal requests in the United States. To date, I have painted 450 plates. I plan to continue adding fifty more each year until capital punishment is abolished.

Above: *The Last Supper, detail.*

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When looking at the inmates' humble choices, it is important to note that while rituals and traditions vary, most states limit final-meal allowances to twenty dollars. Maryland is the only state that does not allow any meal selection. A last cigarette is permitted in some prisons. Alcohol is prohibited in all. Texas denies bubble gum. Sometimes requests provide clues about personality, race, and region. An Oregon inmate's final meal request closed with "I would appreciate the eggs hot." And who wouldn't. 🍳



Clockwise from Top Left: Maryland, 17 July 2004: Chicken patty, potatoes and gravy, green beans, marble cake, milk, and fruit punch [standard-issue meal]; Alabama, 25 October 2006; Texas, 22 February 2007: Boiled eggs, pork chops, fried chicken, tacos, fried okra, potato salad, French fries, bacon, baked potatoes, sour cream, sliced onions, jalapeño peppers, pickles, cabbage, tomatoes, and Sprite soda; Illinois, 21 January 1998: Coke Classic and Camel; North Carolina, 30 January 1998: One honey bun; Indiana, 14 March 2001: German ravioli and chicken dumplings prepared by his mother and prison dietary staff.

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Clockwise from Top Left: Texas, 27 June 2006; South Carolina, 18 March 2004: A bottle of Dom Perignon [request not granted]; Oklahoma, 27 April 2000: Catfish, French fries, plums, grapes, strawberry shortcake, and Sprite soda; Oregon, 6 September 1996: 5 fried eggs (sunnyside-up), hash browns, bacon strips (crisp), stack of pancakes with syrup, hot coffee, milk, and cold orange juice; Virginia, 19 February 2009; Texas, 12 September 2006: Four olives and a bottle of wild-berry-flavored water.

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